

instruction focusing on religion, reading, writing and arithmetic. Limerick hired its very first law enforcement officer, a constable, in 1767, before organized police protection began in 1961. For the first 250 years of Limerick Township's history, all public records were kept in individual homes until the municipal building was erected in 1973, with a ceremony and dedication in 1974. In 1968, the Philadelphia Electric Company selected a site within the Township for construction of two nuclear power generating units and, by 1986, the plant was fully operational. Today there are four elementary schools that serve the Township's children, two fire companies, an airport and numerous churches—just a few more indications of how the community has grown through the years.

Flourishing Limerick Township, however, saw an acceleration of growth particularly after the opening of the Pottstown Expressway (Rt. 422) in 1985, which connects the Limerick area to King of Prussia as well as nearby Philadelphia. Since its completion, the Township has seen skyrocketing residential and commercial growth resulting in many new businesses and residents who call Limerick Township home. Today, Limerick Township, one of the oldest townships in Pennsylvania, is considered one of the most desirable and respected communities in the Philadelphia region.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Limerick Township for 125 years of history, heritage and service. I also recognize the fine citizens and officials of Limerick Township, including Township Supervisors Thomas J. DiBello, Kenneth W. Sperring Jr., Francis T. Grant, Frederick L. Fidler and Joseph T. Greco, for making Limerick Township the wonderful community it is today.

HONORING WARREN WILSON

HON. MICHAEL BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 4, 2003

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Warren Wilson, a former constituent and friend whose short life touched those with whom he came into contact.

Warren Wilson was, more than anything else, generous. I have met few people in my life whose generosity and charity exceeded Warren's. He willingly gave his time, energy, and money to help those in need. He performed free legal work for those who could not afford it. He raised money for charitable organizations that helped the poor and down-trodden. He volunteered to serve on the boards of local community and service organizations.

Warren Wilson was, however, more than just an asset to our community. He was a loving husband to his wonderful wife, Beth. He was a devoted father to his fine son, Scott. And he was a mentor to my children, especially to my son Gus, who runs the law practice that I started before I came to Congress.

Warren also was my friend. He was someone with whom I could watch a baseball game, someone with whom I could discuss the issues we debate in this hallowed chamber, and someone with whom I could talk

about life and our roles in it. One of my proudest and most gratifying moments in Congress came when I was able to appoint his son to serve as a congressional page. Warren was so proud of Scott, as was I for the outstanding job he did during his time in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I was blessed to know Warren Wilson and to have had him as a friend. And the world is a much better place for having had him in it. I know that, although his earthly life has passed, his impact will be felt by those he touched for many, many years to come.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION HONORING CELIA CRUZ BY AWARDING HER THE CONGRES- SIONAL GOLD MEDAL

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 4, 2003

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer legislation to honor my great friend, the music icon, Celia Cruz, who lost her courageous battle with cancer on July 17, 2003.

Last night, during the Latin Grammy's, Americans were mesmerized by an emotional and wonderful tribute to the great Celia Cruz. Today, in the People's House, I am joined by my colleague, Representative ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, to introduce legislation that will posthumously award Celia Cruz the Congressional Gold Medal.

Celia de la Caridad Cruz Alonso was born on October 21, 1924, in Havana, Cuba. Her career blossomed when she left Cuba for the United States in 1960, where she eventually made Fort Lee, New Jersey her home.

Over a five decade career as an entertainer, Celia Cruz became known as the "Queen of Salsa," and claimed the calling card cry of "Azucucar!" Celia's passion, boundless energy, and charisma transfixed generations of salsa fans and musicians. She recorded more than 70 albums and her collaborative efforts with other performers including the legendary salsa artist Tito Puente, pop star David Byrne, and hip-hop producer Wyclef Jean helped break down ethnic and cultural barriers. She was one of the few bridges that crossed cultural and racial divides.

Celia's musical talent earned her hundreds of awards worldwide, including five Grammy's, two Latin Grammy's, and the National Medal of Arts, the highest honor bestowed on an artist in the United States. She was a Hispanic Heritage Awards Lifetime Achievement recipient, and has a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame. Her music was a unifying force, and her passion for a free Cuba was evidenced in both her music and her words.

Celia touched the lives of millions. More than 100,000 individuals mourned her loss at her wake in Miami, Florida and 75,000 people lined the streets of Manhattan to pay their respects as her funeral procession made its way through the streets of New York City.

Celia Cruz made countless contributions to American society and the world as an entertainer, and she was an ambassador of Latino culture and a voice of freedom. Her music, her words, and her love of freedom live on. This legislation would make Celia the first Latina to receive the Congressional Gold Medal.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I urge the leadership to bring it swiftly to the floor for a vote.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAX BURNS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 4, 2003

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide an explanation for my absence during three votes yesterday evening.

During yesterday's votes of roll Nos. 460, 461, and 462, I was en route to the Capitol from Savannah due to weather delays in the Washington area. Had I been present, I would have voted in the affirmative for each.

RECOGNITION OF THE 13TH ANNI- VERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABIL- ITIES ACT INTO LAW

HON. KATHERINE HARRIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 4, 2003

Ms. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate a landmark civil rights anniversary in American history, which passed after we had adjourned for the District Work Period in July. Thirteen years ago, the first President Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act into law, launching a new era in our nation's everlasting journey towards equal opportunity for all.

This long-overdue legislation finally breathed life into the principal that every American has the right to be a full and equal participant in our society.

As Florida's Secretary of State, I was blessed to have the opportunity to apply the mission of the ADA to the cause of election reform. Beginning with my appointment of a Select Task Force in 2001, we worked to remove the obstacles that prevented persons with disabilities in Florida from enjoying the sanctity of the secret ballot and the civic majesty of going to the polls on Election Day.

Thanks to powerful advocates from Florida's disabilities community like Pam Dorwarth, Doug Towne, and Richard LaBelle as well as the skilled leadership of Colonel Charley Price in mobilizing our veterans with disabilities, Florida became the first state in the nation to pass wide-ranging legislation vindicating the voting rights of persons with disabilities.

As we celebrate how far we have come, we must not forget how many miles we still must travel to truly secure for every American the rights and privileges that most of us take for granted.

AMERICA HAS LOST A GREAT WARRIOR AND HERO: GENERAL RAY DAVIS

HON. JOHN LINDER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 4, 2003

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I mourn the loss of retired U.S. Marine Corps General Raymond G. Davis, who passed away yesterday in Atlanta, Georgia.